

Minutes  
Board of Supervisors  
Special Meeting  
September 9, 2021

Members Present: Morgan Phenix, Chairman At-Large  
D. Keith Guzy, Jr., District 1  
Allen Louderback, District 2  
Jeff Vaughan, District 5

Absent: Mark Stroupe, District 3  
Larry Foltz, District 4

Staff Present: Amity Moler, County Administrator  
Josh Hahn, GIS Coordinator  
Nina Fox, Director for Economic Development & Tourism  
Michael Helm, County Attorney

**Call to Order:**

Chairman Morgan Phenix called to order the special meeting of the Page County Board of Supervisors on Thursday, September 9, 2021, at 5:00 p.m., in the rear parking lot of the Page County Government Center, 103 South Court Street, Luray, VA 22835.

**Action on All Points Broadband Proposal:**

Mrs. Moler provided a map to the Board outlining the areas where All Points Broadband intends to provide broadband coverage. She reported that at the end of FY2021, the Fund Balance was \$16.6 million, excluding the ARPA funds received at the end of June 2021. The Board had approved \$1.5 million for the County's and School's CIP to come from the Fund Balance, which leaves a total of \$15.1 million. The County is required to maintain a Fund Balance of 15%, which is about \$7 million. The deadline for submitting the VATI application to help fund the broadband proposal is due September 14, 2021.

Supervisor Guzy expressed concern that the County will be spending \$7.8 million for broadband for 3,100 homes. According to the map, he noted that very little in District 1 would be served by the project. He also expressed that if the County takes approximately \$3.8 million from the Fund Balance then the Board can't fund other requests from that and it will have to come from the General Fund.

Supervisor Louderback indicated his concern is that it was presented to the Board one week before the VATI application was due and there was no time for the Board to think about it and discuss it.

Mrs. Moler stated that for the past few years the County has said that we are working on broadband and here we have an opportunity to capitalize on our efforts. Other companies have not come forward with a proposal. Mr. Carr had stated during his presentation that the topography is the biggest issue in the cost factor.

Supervisor Guzy indicated that Highspeed Link is working with RF Connect on a wireless solution and they will have a very high percentage of the County covered that is as good or better than 25 x 3 service. He said if a company is not going to service 100% of the area or the areas that need it the most, then why would we spend \$7.8 million for a few.

Chairman Phenix said the Board has been harping on economic development and the number one issue is broadband. He expressed concern with the amount of money the County will lose if the Board does not accept the proposal. He shamed the Board if they do not take advantage of the opportunity.

Mrs. Moler said that if the project is awarded the VATI grant, the whole county would then be served with internet, within the next two years.

Nina Fox, Director for Economic Development & Tourism, clarified that the All Points proposal was for service to provide a minimum of 50 x 50 speeds for \$59.99 (fixed) for 30 years, with an increase only for inflation. The 3,100 homes will be covered but anyone who needs fiber to their house past where they have proposed to take it will be charged \$1.20 per linear foot, at a maximum rate of \$199 per household. From an economic development standpoint, she highlighted that cellular internet is a great option when there is no other option, but the best reliable internet source is wired and it is what will make a difference for the community. She said \$8 million spent on a jail is not going to have the return on investment (ROI) in the community. This is an investment that can help the community pay for jail costs. The jail is not going to be an investment that helps pay for the broadband. Mrs. Fox said that teleworkers need guaranteed, wired service to be able to work from home. She said these funds have been available and the County knew they would be coming to some degree and Comcast, Centurylink or any other provider has not approached the County. This is the current proposal before the Board to leverage these funds and it doesn't appear that any other provider is interested in partnering with a project. Mrs. Moler interjected that a jail costs \$40 million not \$8 million. She added that the students need reliable internet access.

Supervisor Louderback indicated that he is not against the project, but feels we are paying a large amount in comparison to other counties. He asked who will run the system once it is up and running. Mrs. Moler explained that All Points is the ISP and will maintain the system. Supervisor Louderback said once the County approves to move forward then we will be locked into the project. He said he feels that this is not the best deal.

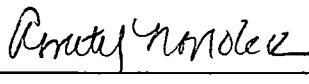
Supervisor Guzy said it is not a good deal for Page County.

**Motion:** Supervisor Vaughan moved to proceed with the application with All Points Broadband. Supervisor Louderback seconded the motion and it carried by a vote of 3-1. Aye: Louderback, Vaughan, Phenix. Nay: Guzy. Absent: Stroupe, Foltz.

**Adjourn:** 5:59 p.m.

With no further business to discuss, Chairman Phenix adjourned the meeting.

  
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Morgan Phenix, Chairman

  
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Amity Moler, County Administrator